

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

**The claims are amended as follows:**

1. (Currently amended) A case comprising:

a containing part adapted to contain objects to be contained, ~~and~~ ;

a lid part disposed which is provided on an opening of said containing part and connected to said containing part by ~~via~~ a hinge part, said lid part operable and adapted to be freely opened and closed, ; and

~~characterized in that in areas near corners of both side faces of said opening of said containing part and an opening of said lid part, there are provided~~

at least one pair of locking portions, said locking portions being operable which are respectively adapted to be engaged with each other and disposed in areas near corners of both side faces of said opening of said containing part and an opening of said lid part, and

wherein said locking portions extend along said side faces of said containing part and said side faces of said lid part in a direction of a vertical axis of said case, said direction of said vertical axis corresponding to a direction of opening of said case.

2. (Currently amended) The A case as claimed in claim 1, wherein characterized in that said areas area near said corners extend from a front face of said case along said side faces to

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111  
U.S. Application No. 10/030,315  
Attorney Docket No. Q66240

a point that is corner is less than or equal to one fourth or less of a width of each of said side  
faces of said case ~~from a front face.~~

3. (Currently amended) The A case as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~characterized in~~  
~~that~~ said locking portions comprise a shape of a first depression and a first projection and a shape  
of a second projection and a second depression which are adapted to be engaged with each other.

A 4. (Currently amended) The A case as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~characterized in~~  
~~that~~ said locking portions comprise a depression and a projection which are adapted to be  
engaged with each other, or a projection and a depression which are adapted to be engaged with  
each other.

5. (Currently amended) The A case as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~characterized in~~  
~~that~~ said locking portions are disposed at ~~provided in~~ areas near corners at a front side of said  
case, and disposed at ~~in~~ substantially middle areas of both said side faces of said openings of said  
containing part and said lid part, ~~or in areas near corners at a back side.~~

6. (Currently amended) The A case as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~characterized in~~  
~~that~~ said locking portions comprise an undercut shape ~~are in a shape of being undercut free.~~

7. (New) The case as claimed in claim 1, wherein said locking portions are disposed at areas near corners at a front side of said case, and disposed at areas near corners at a back side of said case.

8. (New) The case as claimed in claim 1, wherein ridgelines of said projections and depressions of said locking portions are rounded.

a 9. (New) A case comprising:  
a containing part comprising a deep container portion and an outer stepped portion having a thin wall thickness at an open edge of an opening of the containing part, said containing part being adapted to contain objects to be contained;

a lid part provided with an inner stepped portion having a thin wall thickness at an open edge of an opening of said lid part, said lid part being disposed on said opening of said containing part and connected to said containing part by a hinge part, said lid part being operable to be freely opened and closed; and

at least one pair of locking portions, said locking portions adapted to be engaged with each other and disposed in areas near corners of both side faces of said opening of said containing part and an opening of said lid part;

wherein said outer stepped portion of said containing part and said inner stepped portion of said lid part are adapted to be engaged with each other; and

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111  
U.S. Application No. 10/030,315  
Attorney Docket No. Q66240

wherein said locking portions extend along said side faces of said containing part and  
said side faces of said lid part in a direction of a vertical axis of said case, said direction of said  
vertical axis corresponding to a direction of opening of said case.

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